

IDNR Lake Michigan Coastal Program

Coastal Advisory Board Meeting

Informational Meeting

February 19, 2014

10 AM CT

LaPorte County – City of Michigan City, Emergency Management Conference Room
100 East Michigan Boulevard, Michigan City, IN 46360

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Voting: Christine Livingston (IDT), Geof Benson (Beverly Shores), Christopher Meyers (Lake County), Laura Brennan for Bob Daum (NPS-IDNR), Dan Plath (NiSource), Tiffany Tolbert (Indiana Landmarks), Craig Phillips (Michigan City Planning)

Non-Voting: Young Choi (Purdue Calumet), Bill Moran (USDA), Elizabeth McCloskey (USFWS), Leslie Dorworth (ILSG), Kathy Luther (NIRPC), Ashley Snyder (IDEM)

Non-Board Members: Rachel Shmagranoff (Purdue Calumet), Lee Botts (Shifting Sands), Jim Smith (IDEM), Ken Purze (KRBC), Cathy Martin (Save the Dunes), Jared Teutsch (Alliance for the Great Lakes), Josh Lott (NOAA), Daniel Goldfarb (Wildlife Habitat Council)

LMCP Staff: Mike Molnar, Maggie Byrne, Dorreen Carey, Derek Nimetz, Margaret Palicka, Breana Sowers

Welcome and Introductions - Elizabeth McCloskey Pledge of Allegiance begins at 10:10 am Introductions starting with Mike Molnar

- **Old Business** – Approval of CAB Meeting Minutes from December 18, 2013

- **New Business – Program Updates:**

* **LMCP Staff** – Staff changes: Announcement of Sergio Mendoza leaving and going back to Hobart, we also have a new intern – Margaret Palicka. We will be choosing the final date of program evaluation and will know NOAA numbers in the next week or two. Josh Lott from NOAA is visiting - on a road trip through Midwest – here today to address the advisory board.

* **NOAA Program Update – Josh Lott, NOAA OCRM:** Introduces himself, based in Silver Spring Maryland. Explains exactly what the NOAA office does; includes a presentation of his office structure, where NOAA works and who they work with. Notes that LMCP is a national mandate program and once Illinois came on board a few years ago – now Midwest is covered. Digital Coast highlights: <https://www.csc.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/> What the website can offer the program, stakeholders and governments: Gives a snapshot of coastal

regions, percentages of populations within the floodplain, how to wetlands benefit the community. (See presentation). Land cover atlas – can see the current and past land cover in the coastal region. Visualization studies – potential changes along the coast. Case studies around the region – impacts of flooding and lake level change. **Question from CAB:** Recommendation of site visits. Lee Botts: concerned that local officials are not being fully informed about the great lake level changes – is the coastal program helping with this? Josh replies– “yes, we present information, work with communities on infrastructure projects”. Unknown voice: lake levels – agreements in place for locks? Josh replies - “A lot of it is agreements between the entities and the locks themselves.”

- **Guest Presentations:**

* **Great Lakes Compact - Jared Teutsch, J.D., Alliance for the Great Lakes** – Addressing the CAB to clarify what the Compact is and does. (See presentation.) Questions he asks: Who knows about it? What is the alliance? **Overview of the Alliance:** Started 40 years ago by Lee Botts, because they needed a citizen based advocate for the Great Lakes. There are now over 12,000 supporters; most are in the Lake Michigan basin. Sustainable water use was the instigator for the compact. Originally, tankers were coming in and taking water away from Lake Michigan. Since it is a non-renewable resource, there needed to be laws in place to protect it from being shipped overseas. Therefore, an agreement was put in place, law in 2008, to keep this from happening. Federal Great Lakes Compact sets up priority issues and focal points: water withdrawal and consumptive use and a limited # of people can apply for water in the straddling communities of the great lake basin. Regional differences and concepts can help us maintain our own limited water resources. Illinois should champion the water conservation efforts and Indiana is developing rules currently. **Challenges:** Indiana’s regulations to acquire permits for water extraction are not strict enough. City of Waukesha will be the first test city, *Questions that remain if they are able to request water: any other supply available? Do they need the water? Demand forecast – what will they need in the future? Can they maximize the water conservation efficiency?*

Questions/Comments from CAB: Why isn’t something done about Chicago dumping in to the Mississippi – Chicago is the only community that doesn’t put water back into the lake. Chicago affected the lake level by 2 inches when they re-directed the river.

* **Shifting Sands trailer preview - Lee Botts and Patricia Wisniewski** – (See Video) Pat had previously produced the “Everglades of the North”, which focused on the Kankakee Marsh. The current documentary covers the Great Lakes watershed area, changes in the environment, how pollution has changed and the main focus – how relationships and partnerships have evolved over the years. **Background:** Indiana did not want to be included under the Great Lakes water quality and they created a partnership with shoreline environmentalists to promote the compact. Lee and Pat are sharing the trailer because LMCP partially sponsored the project and celebrations for Indiana’s 200th anniversary and the NPS 100th anniversary are coming up in 2016. **Comments/Questions:** from Lee Botts: “We welcome feedback and there are a lot of people in this room who are very much a part of this project.” From attendee: “Is this the most significant river clean up in the US? Has the industry been involved?” Lee, “Yes – industry has been involved and this will be added into the documentary later, along with local sponsors and businesses that have supported us. We will also be coming back for extended support for the supplemental outreach program used in the future.”

*** Monitoring Work at Wolf Lake – Dr. Young Choi and student, Rachel Shmagranoff (Purdue Calumet):** Dr. Choi introduces his student and the Wolf Lake project site, which is over by the horseshoe casino. **Project Overview and Background:** Area: 150 acres 5.5 meters and in 2012 there was a drought – students could actually walk through and in the lake. This Wetland area has a plethora of plants and animals, yet several of the populations needed to be reintroduced or conserved. Additionally, the project planners wanted to filter and control water quality and stabilize the shoreline. In 2007, the Army Corps of Engineers came in to do restoration, 146 native species were introduced. Dr. Choi and several students reviewed the area years later to see how successful the conservation efforts were. (See presentation.) **Methods:** Used the point contact method, cleaned up debris left from ACE, compared native and non-native species growth, and took samples of water, plants and animals. Main Issue: Dangerous debris from restoration process. **Questions/Comments from CAB:** Will there be follow-up to this project? “Yes, especially for phragmites and cattails. In the 1970’s Wolf Lake had the greatest number of native plants, and it would be great to raise those numbers again.” How many students were involved? “4-6 people” What did you learn the most? “Something different happened everyday....cleaning up was the most meaningful part of the project. I also enjoy presenting and learning what others are doing.” Is there any ongoing stewardship planned? “Our Group finished most of the lake; much more isn’t needed at this time.” General Comments about mute swans in the area.

- **Reports – LMCP Staff –**

***Grants:** Grants – 2014 funding cycle, Jan 10th proposal deadline was extended until the 13th. 20 proposals – 2 were not accepted. 17 were able to be scored and ranked by the Technical Advisory Board and will now be submitted to the director of DNR. We will then let applicants know if they have been chosen. Still have to wait on NOAA's final approval. Preparing for strategic planning, database is not progressing as we would have hoped. We have been communicating and collaborating with other CZM Program grant managers around the Great Lakes region.

***Outreach:** Call for CAM event nominations – looking to have events submitted by April 15th.

***CELCP:** Moon Valley update – Current land owner has accepted another offer and LMCP is not sure if/when it will be resolved. DNR is going to contact future owner to see if they are willing to protect the area. CAB Discussion on how/why the project fell through.

***Non-Point/Septic:** Please pick up Invitation for the rural assistance program, possibly in districts that need upgrades, identify needs, community planners will also attend. At NIRPC on Feb 28th, 2014. NIRPC is also a partner to improve awareness of in septic system coordination work group. Meet monthly with stakeholders to discuss issues that may have an impact on the community. Part of the LMCP, 6217 is a standalone program responsible for 6 categories; Agriculture, Forestry, urban/rural areas, marinas, hydro-modification, wetlands and riparian areas. LMCP has been working since 2007 to get approval of monitoring and critical measures of each of these areas – working with IDEM. **Discussion:** Will continue the conversation after the meeting.

- **Announcements:**

* Mike Molnar – Still need nominations for 3 positions – Craig Phillips, Mayor Copeland and Kathy Sipple will be done serving their term in April. Nominations will be taken to the director and will be decided from there. Information will be posted online.

Next Meeting – June 18, 2014 - Public Input Meeting - 6:30 PM CDT

Porter County – Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN

Topics: 1. Reports 2. Public Input Session for 2015 Coastal Grants Priorities